



# Solar Herb Dryer

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## PARTS:

- [Picture frame \(1\)](#)  
*[wooden](#)*
- [Wire mesh \(1\)](#)  
*[This is a great way to reuse an old window or door screen.](#)*
- [Wine corks \(4\)](#)
- [Eye screws \(1\)](#)  
*[at least 6](#)*
- [Suction cups \(1\)](#)  
*[with hooks attached: 2](#)*
- [Glue \(1\)](#)  
*[all-purpose, nontoxic](#)*

## SUMMARY

I love using fresh organic herbs when I cook, but they always come in big bunches when I invariably need only a few sprigs. So what to do with the extra? Dry them!

With materials you find lying around the house, you can make a lovely solar herb dryer. Use the power of the sun to dry herbs for yourself or to make holiday gifts for friends and family.

## Step 1 — Prepare the frame.



- Remove everything (glass and backing) from your frame until you're left with just the wooden piece.
- If the frame has built-in metal clips for holding a picture in place, leave those in.

## Step 2



- Measure the opening of your frame.
- If you're using screen mesh from an old window or door screen, first wash it really well.
- Cut 2 pieces of screen, one to fit exactly into the opening (we'll call this the "lower screen") and one slightly larger. You'll use the 2 pieces of screen to sandwich your herbs.

### Step 3



- Attach the lower screen to the back of the frame by simply gluing the edges down.
- The second screen must be removable, so if your frame already has built-in metal clips, you can use these for fastening the screen into the frame. If not, twist in some eye screws parallel to and just above the lower screen.
- The number of screws will vary based on the size of your frame. Turn the eyes parallel in order to slip the upper screen in and out. Turn them perpendicular to secure the screen once your herbs are in place.

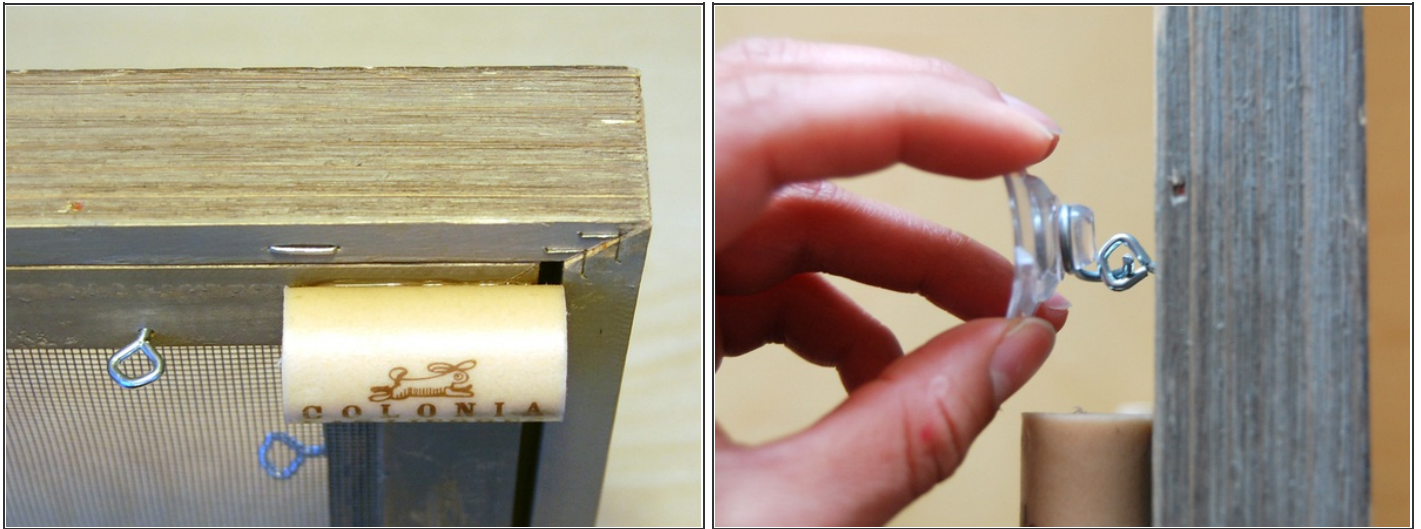
### Step 4



- On the back of your herb dryer, glue a cork to each corner so that when you flip it over it forms a little table.
- This will allow the necessary air to circulate freely above and below flat-dried herbs. The corks will also help protect your window if you hang your dryer.




## Step 5 — Hang the frame.



- To prepare the dryer for hanging, you'll need 2 more eye screws and 2 suction cups.
- Screw the eye screws into the back of your frame, as you would if you were going to hang it on a wall.
- Stick your suction cups onto a window, spaced at the same interval as the 2 eye screws. You can also hook the suction cups on first, then hang everything at the same time.

## Step 6 — Use it.



- Place some herbs in your dryer and hang it up on a window that gets exposure to the sun. After about a week, leafy herbs should be ready; you can tell when they become brittle.
- TIP: Strong-stemmed herbs like rosemary, thyme, and sage can be hang-dried, while soft-stemmed and -leaved herbs can be flat-dried, which is why this dryer is designed to work just as well hanging in a window as sitting flat on a tabletop. 
- When you're ready to take the herbs out, just turn the eye screws parallel to the lower screen and slide the upper screen off. You can keep them in a clean, glass jar that's labeled and stored out of the sun. Crush dried herbs between your fingers before adding them to recipes to release the oils in the herbs and bring out their flavor. The herbs should last about a year.

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